

MINOOTEENI PARK AT ACIIPHKAHKIONKI

INDIGENOUS LIFE AND CULTURE

Up through the mid-19th century, the Miami lived in palisaded minooteena (villages) in wiikiaama (small houses, lodges). Hunting would have been primarily of nalaawahki lenasooki (bison), mihšiiwiaki (elk), and moohsooki (deer), and accomplished using a mihtekoopa neehi wiipima (bow and arrows) or atlatl historically.

The Miami and the Peoria grew crops including corn, beans, and squash. The Miami had their own variety of open-pollinated corn called myaamia miincipi, a white flint corn best used for flour or as hominy and mostly used today in stews and breads during tribal gatherings.

Games would have been a pastime shared by many tribes in the area. These include seenseewinki (Bowl Game),

Mahkisina (Moccasin Game), and Peekitahaminki (Lacrosse), which are all still played today. Dancing served many functions for the tribes, including storytelling, celebrating events, and spiritual ceremonies. Many tribes in Oklahoma continue to perform the Stomp Dance today.

The Miami and the Peoria are known for their colorful peepankišaapiikahkia eewkwaatamenki (ribbonwork) which traditionally adorned shirts, skirts, leggings, and moccasins with intricate, geometric designs. The artform of ribbonwork became popular in the 1800s and continues to this day. Clothing decorated with ribbonwork is worn during tribal gatherings and special occasions. Rib-

bonwork designs can be seen in the circles in the paths here at the park.

Forced removal caused tribes to become fragmented, threatened their traditions and languages, and affected all aspects of their way of living. Today, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma has over 7,000 members, and the myaamiaki “Miami People” have a strong, thriving culture that is reclaiming its heritage. The Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma has over 3,700 members today. The Miami and the Peoria are revitalizing their languages, with the Myaamia Center at Miami University leading the way for the Miami tribe. Both tribes have offices dedicated to education about their culture, ecology, history, and language.



Nalaawahki lenasooki or “bison” in English would have been common in Indiana and the Vincennes area prior to European settlement. The lenaswibkanawe or “Buffalo Trace” is a major pathway many earlier travelers would have used following the bison migration route.



peepankišaapiikahkia eewkwaatamenki or Myaamia ribbonwork, a traditional hand-sewn art with intricate geometric designs, is still made and worn by myaamiaki for celebratory events.

Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

myaamiaki iši meehtohseeniwicki
– how the Miami people live

meešiminaakosiyankwi – Miami customs



To listen to audio recordings of the signs in the Myaamia and English languages, use the QR code.



Citizens of the Miami Tribe gather to play peekitahaminki or lacrosse at their annual National Gathering in Oklahoma.

Photo by Karen Baldwin, Miami Tribe of Oklahoma

